

Quaker Oats Cereal Factory  
Southeast corner of Broadway Street and  
Mill Street within the Central Business District  
Akron  
Summit County  
Ohio

HAER No. OH-17

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OHIO,  
77-AKRO,  
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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Location: Within the Central Business District of the City of Akron, Ohio, at the southeast corner of Broadway Street and Mill Street

Quad: Akron West

Dates of Constructions: 1886-1941, Partially  
Rehabilitated 1975-Present for retail and office uses.

Present Owner: Quaker Square Associates, Inc.  
120 East Mill Street  
Akron, Ohio 44308

Present Use: Retail shops, offices, and vacant

Significance: The Quaker Oats Cereal Factory is the last remaining industrial mill and grain storage complex in Akron. This facility at this location dates back to the beginning of milling and cereal production in the City.

Report Assembled By: Richard Lewis Vickers  
Department of Planning and Development  
City of Akron, Ohio

August, 1979

## REPORT ON THE QUAKER OATS CEREAL FACTORY

Statement of Significance:

The Quaker Oats Company traces its history back to 1854 when Ferdinand Schumacher built his first hand-operated mill in Akron. He perfected two revolutionary milling processes--steel cut oats and rolled oats--and popularized the new breakfast product "oatmeal". During the Civil War, Quaker Oats' popularity mushroomed because of its ease of preparation on the battlefield.

Schumacher's company flourished, and in 1872, he built his greatly expanded "German Mills" complex on the present site of the brick factory buildings. Though destroyed by fire in 1886, these structures were quickly replaced by similar buildings on the same stone foundations.

Through various mergers and acquisitions, Schumacher's company became the "Quaker Oats" Company and the Akron headquarters continued to grow through the 1940's. For a number of years before the turn-of-the-century, Quaker Oats was the biggest industry and the largest single employer of the City.

Today, the complex is the only remaining visual element in Akron associated with the Quaker Oats Company; the city where Quaker began and served a vital economic role in the community for decades. Map #1 shows the location of the complex within the City of Akron.

While quartered in Akron, Quaker developed some innovative marketing concepts which have had world-wide impact. In addition, Quaker was a pioneer in the concept of national brand advertising by renaming its generic product (oatmeal) "Quaker Oats" and promoting it by distinguishing it from competitive products. The company also merchandised its products by developing the cross-country "whistle-stop" campaigns to increase public demand.

Quaker, for example, was one of the first companies to actively promote a "slogan" for its product--"Shot from guns". The company was also one of the pioneers in consumer packaging--taking what had been a bulk item and putting it into smaller, easier to handle containers.

The success of the Quaker Oats Company was born in the mill buildings and silos on the Akron site. The complex continues to be an important part of the City's history since it has been "recycled" into a successful regional specialty retailing center by maximizing the quality and character of these handsome industrial structures.

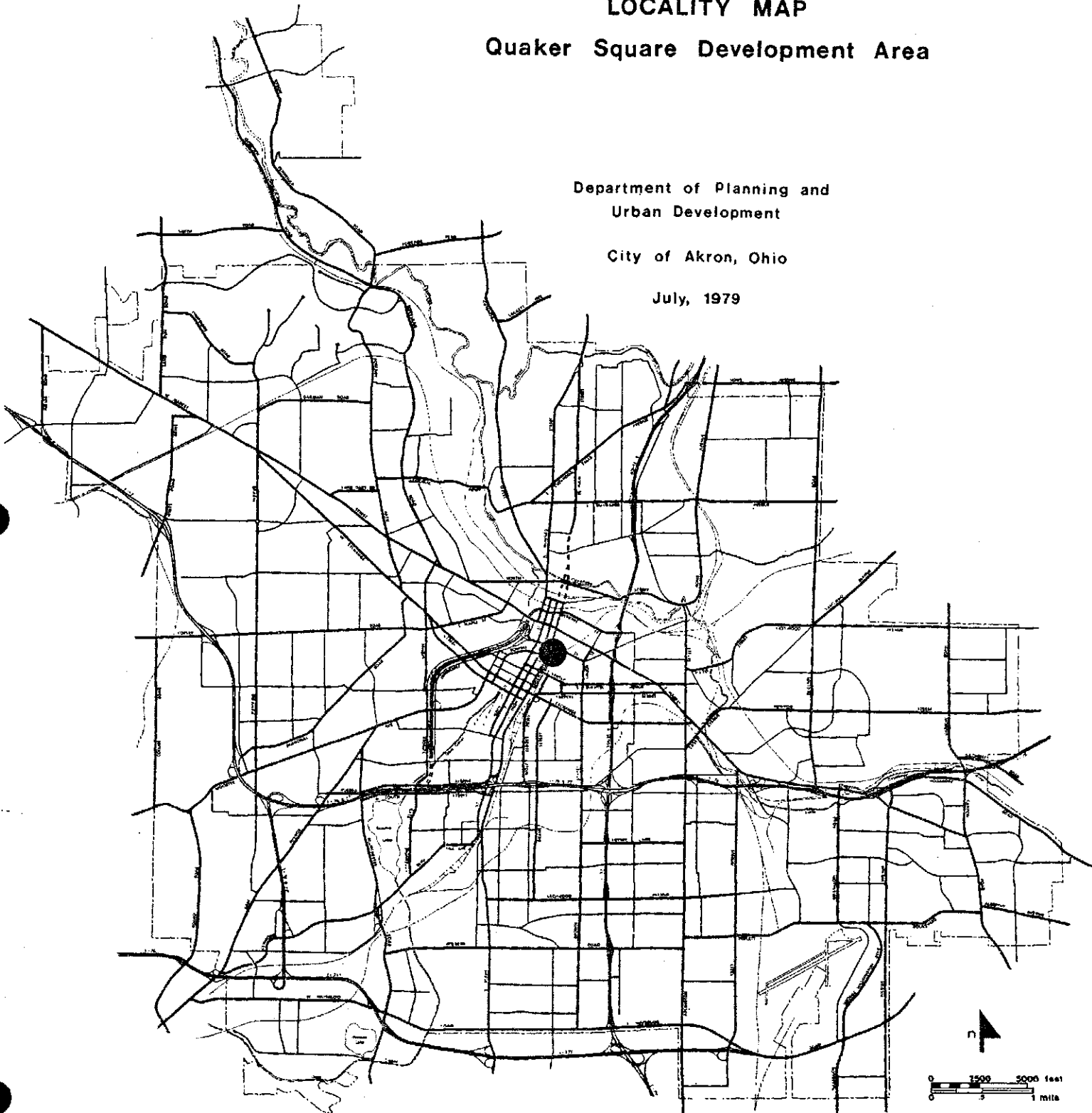
Map 1

LOCALITY MAP  
Quaker Square Development Area

Department of Planning and  
Urban Development

City of Akron, Ohio

July, 1979



Building Description:

The following is a description of the present and original (if known) physical appearance of structures within the Quaker Oats Cereal Complex. Building identification corresponds with structures identified on Map #2. A mylar copy at scale of an ink drawing of the Quaker Oats complex is accompanying this report.

Building

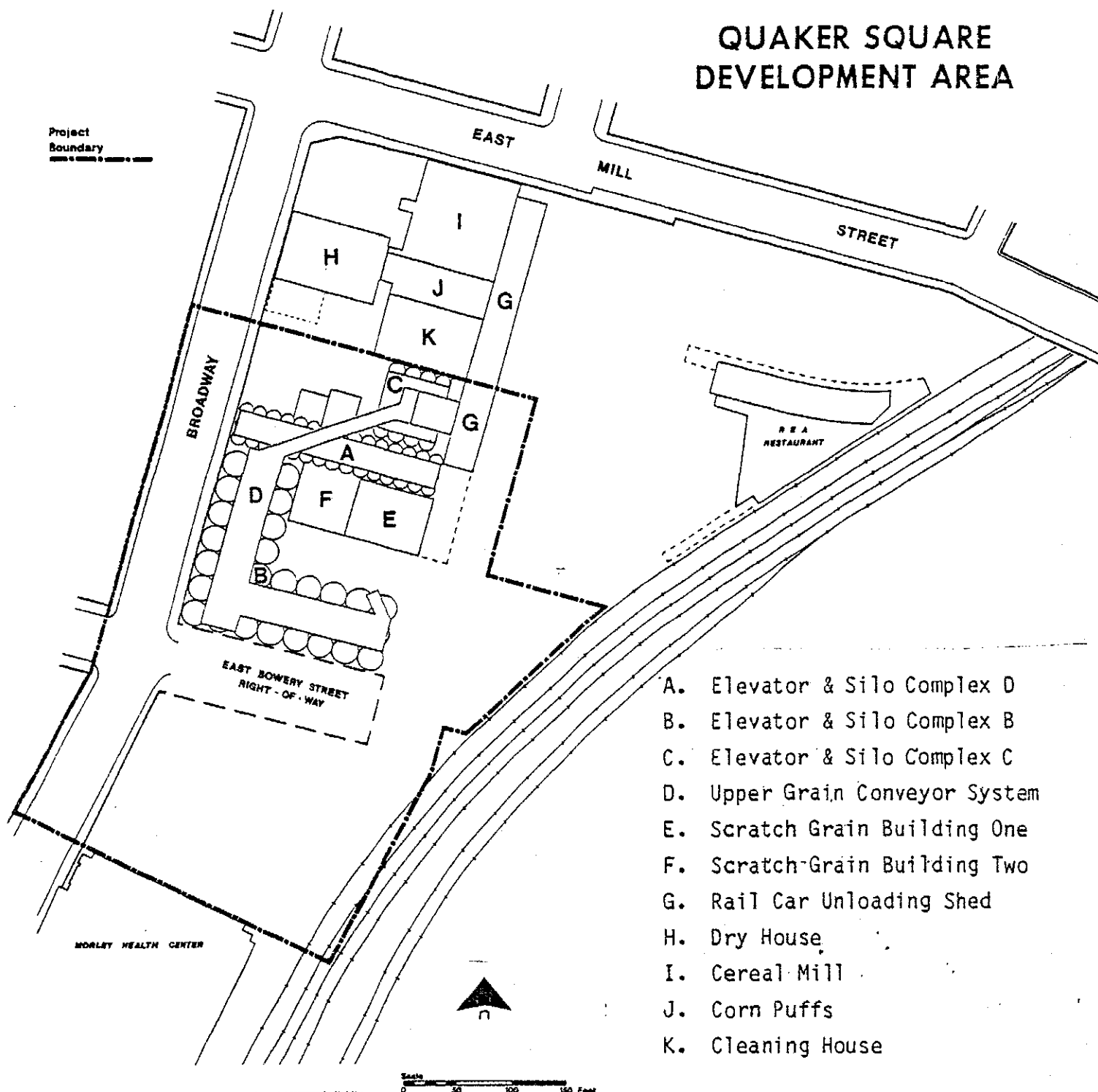
- A Elevator and Silo Complex "D". Built 1910. It consists of a battery of 45 grain storage bins, 12 feet inside diameter, 81 feet high. Six inch walls. Capacity of 320,000 bushels. To be removed as part of silo hotel development in 1979-80.
- B Elevator and Silo Complex "B". Building 1932. It consists of a battery of 36 reinforced, concrete poured in place grain storage silos laid out in an el shape. Approximately 1,400,000 bushels capacity. These have a 24-inch concrete pad under the entire area. Construction of silo walls is 7-8 inches reinforced concrete, 124 feet high. Inside diameter is 24 feet, for 24 bins; 24 feet, 6 inches inside diameter for 12 bins. They were constructed in one continuous pouring operation that lasted three weeks.
- C Elevator and Silo Complex "C". Built 1940. It consists of 20 reinforced concrete grain bins. Elevator section contains stairs, and passenger elevator to top of section contains stairs and passenger elevator to top of silos. Capacity of 300,000 bushels. Silos are 14 feet, 8 inches inside diameter by 132 feet, 9 inches high, 7 inches thick. With the cupola, the total height is 218 feet. This structure is vacant and unused at the present time.
- D Upper Grain Conveyor System, Silo Complex "B". Built 1932 in conjunction with Silo Complex "B". That portion of this steel and concrete structure extending from the top of the bins on Silo Complex "B" across the top of Silo Complex "D" to the top of Silo Complex "C" was added with the construction of Silo Complex "C" in 1940. The bridge portion will be removed in its entirety while only the outside sheeting will be removed from that portion atop Silo Complex "B".

- E Scratch Grain Building One. Built 1886. This is a one-story and basement building. Brick walls, wood and steel framed, wood deck roof. Unfinished interior. Concrete basement floor, wood first floor with steel plates. Size is 53 feet, 6 inches by 68 feet, and an addition of 14 feet, 6 inches by 56 feet, 6 inches. Area per floor is 4,399 square feet. Total area is 8,798 square feet. Deteriorated and slated for removal as part of the Silo Hotel project.
- F Scratch Grain Building Two. Upper three floors added in 1941. Original construction unknown. It has four levels of brick and concrete construction. Lower level has a concrete floor; upper floors are concrete slab on steel framing. Size is 39 feet by 53 feet, 6 inches. Area per floor is 2,089 square feet. Total area is 8,346 square feet. Deteriorated and slated for removal as part of the Silo Hotel project.
- G Rail Car Loading Shed. Built 1940. A steel frame structure with corrugated sheet metal facing served as a protected siding area. Used for rail car dumping. This area is partially enclosed. At present functioning as a gallery/entrance to the rehabilitated structure serving as a retail-office complex.
- H "Dry House". 65 feet by 95 feet with a concrete super structure and masonry walls. It consists of five levels. The structure has been rehabilitated for retail and office use.
- I Cereal Mill Building. 90 feet by 100 feet. Four levels plus an 18-foot basement. Heavy timber and beam interior structure. Masonry exterior of 12-inch thick walls, post generally on 14-foot centers. Floors made of 2 by 6's, arranged vertically and spiked together side to side, covered with hardwood flooring. Adapted for reuse as retail and office space.
- J "Corn Puffs" Building. 42 feet by 90 feet, with matching foot-thick masonry exterior. Interior structure is steel frame and poured in place concrete flooring. Adapted for reuse as retail and office space.
- K Cleaning House. 49 feet by 90 feet. Five level timber post and beam construction with masonry walls matching. Adapted for reuse as retail and office space.

Map 2

# BUILDING DESCRIPTION MAP

## QUAKER SQUARE DEVELOPMENT AREA



Proposed Modification

The proposed development of a hotel complex within Silo Complex B and the addition of new structures will permanently alter the appearance and reuse of Silo Complex B. Given the Central Business District location, the prospect for the revived industrial use of this site must be viewed as unlikely and unrealistic. The proposed project will also involve the removal of the Silo Complex D, the upper grain conveyor system shell, and Scratch Grain Buildings One and Two.

The current project schedule will be carried out during 1979 and 1980.



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